

fellow Republicans to increase the credit that was set in 1997 at \$500 to move it to \$1,000. Moreover, the credit was made partially refundable for the very first time.

This made low-income working families eligible to receive a tax refund, even if they had paid no income tax—though they paid the payroll tax. And, obviously, the child tax credit helped offset the regressive impact on the working—low-income working people.

Then, in 2017, Republicans went even further in improving this credit because we doubled the credit, and we increased the amount that those who pay no Federal income tax can receive a tax refund. But a key feature of the child tax credit through these 25 years has always been that it is a work incentive.

In order to benefit them, the tax filer must have at least a minimal amount of earned income, which basically means wages from employment. As you earn more, a larger share of the credit becomes refundable, partially offsetting the payroll taxes.

So, now, this is what the Democrats have in mind: They want to turn this broadly popular, this bipartisan, this pro-work tax incentive into a government assistance program akin to the old, pre-Clinton welfare program.

What Democrats propose can no longer be considered a tax credit in any traditional sense of the word. The benefit is entirely divorced from the tax system in every way except how the tax system is going to give out the benefits.

To qualify, no one in the household needs to work, needs to have income, or needs to pay any sort of Federal tax at all. Now, even more alarming, there are no job search requirements, no job skill development assistance, and no educational assistance—the foundation of the welfare reform of 1996, when the whole idea was to help people help themselves by either schooling or productive employment.

All the requirements then that apply to those receiving TANF under the 1996 welfare reforms would be gone. In other words, their proposal provides no help to getting struggling parents back on their feet or to tackle the root causes of generational poverty.

The bipartisan 1996 reform bill—everything I just said they propose is contrary to that basic Federal reform of 1996. In other words, this is a big step back to encouraging people into a lifetime in poverty. I fear the Democrats' proposal will be a poverty trap for far too many needy families.

We would be reversing the gains made since we had this bipartisan welfare reform of 1996 signed by a Democratic President. That is exactly what a recent University of Chicago analysis of the Democrats' proposal suggests will occur.

According to this study, the Democrats' child tax credit proposal would result in 1.5 million parents leaving the workforce at a time when everybody is

crying that we need to get people back into the workforce if you want to keep inflation under control, if you want to keep the supply chain moving smoothly.

This analysis directly contradicts Democrats' claims that their proposal will cut poverty in half. In fact, according to the University of Chicago authors, "deep child poverty would not fall at all." I will bet the Democrats are trying to sell this on the proposition that it is going to reduce child poverty, but not according to the University of Chicago scholars. In fact, it might even make things worse.

That is exactly why Democrats and Republicans came together to reform welfare in 1996, because it became self-evident that child poverty could not be solved simply through money alone.

If money alone is a solution, why are my Democratic colleagues willing to settle for only reducing child poverty by half?

Why don't they simply dedicate more of their foreign \$4.2 trillion tax-and-spending spree to completely end child poverty?

Is it that they believe subsidizing individuals to buy electric vehicles, as their bill would do, is more important than eradicating child poverty?

I fully support lending a hand to families in need of support, but our policies must be focused on providing a hand up, not a handout. Providing assistance untethered from any work or job promotion requirement or education or work training requirement is not a compassionate approach to helping people. You want to help people get in the world of work because only in the world of work can you work yourself up the ladder and get out of poverty. But being on government programs is a certainty of a lifetime of poverty.

No, it is not compassionate. It is just the opposite. It sets up a generation of Americans being trapped in soul-crushing government dependencies.

I urge my colleagues to abandon their ill-conceived, "no strings attached" child tax credit proposal. They would get a lot of Republican support—bipartisan support—for improving the child tax credit, but not this way. Do not yank away the ladder of opportunity from struggling Americans. Take a page out of former President Clinton's playbook. Work with Republicans to find a bipartisan solution that will actually help low-income families together.

EAGLES ACT

On another point, Mr. President, I would like to talk about preventing acts of mass violence.

Yesterday, the shooter at the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School tragedy in Parkland, FL, a few years ago, pled guilty to multiple counts of first-degree murder.

There were 14 students and 3 school staff senselessly losing their lives in just a few minutes when a former student struggling with clear behavior problems and mental health issues indiscriminately opened fire.

I hope that his guilty plea brings at least some sense of closure and justice for the victims' families. While there is nothing that we can do to take back the terrible events of that day, we need to do what we can to make sure such horrific acts don't ever happen again.

That is why earlier this year, in a bipartisan approach, I, along with Senators CORTEZ MASTO, COLLINS, MANCHIN, HASSAN, RUBIO, and SCOTT of Florida, introduced what we called the EAGLES Act.

The EAGLES Act will help fund and reauthorize the U.S. Secret Service's National Threat Assessment Center. It goes by the nickname of NTAC. An identical bill was introduced in the House by Representatives DEUTCH and DIAZ-BALART.

NTAC studies targeted violence and helps proactively identify and manage threats before they result in more tragedies. The EAGLES Act also establishes a Safe School Initiative, a national program on school violence prevention that will include expanded research on school violence.

When the Secret Service reviewed school shootings, it found that all attackers exhibited concerning behaviors before engaging in the act of violence. If these signs were recognized early enough, these attacks could have been stopped.

The father of one of the Parkland victims and the president of Stand with Parkland—that is an organization—said that NTAC has been "essential to thwarting mass shooters and targeted violence." He also said that "the EAGLES Act is a critical expansion of the program that prioritizes school safety and directs key funding to prevent the next mass school shooting."

The EAGLES Act is a commonsense bill to fund and reauthorize the Secret Service's NTAC that is supported by over 40 State attorneys general and representatives from both sides of the aisle. It is a bill that, hopefully, honors the lives and memories of the Parkland victims by ensuring that such tragedies don't happen again.

I ask and encourage all of my Senate colleagues to support the bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

CONFIRMATION OF TANA LIN

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I rise today to commend the confirmation of Tana Lin—a trailblazing civil rights lawyer and former public defender—to serve as U.S. District Court judge for the Western District of Washington in the Seattle courthouse.

Ms. Lin has led a tremendous career fighting for civil and human rights, and I am very proud to have recommended her to President Biden.

There are many reasons to be excited about Tana Lin's confirmation. One of them that is extremely important to me is she will be the first-ever public defender serving as U.S. District Court judge in Washington State, and that really matters.

It matters when we put a former public defender and civil rights lawyer on the Federal bench. It matters quite a bit, I think, when a Federal judge has represented clients who couldn't afford to hire their own lawyer. It matters that Ms. Lin has represented Washington State farmworkers dealing with wage theft. It matters that Ms. Lin stood up for refugees and immigrants against unconstitutional Executive actions, and that she had successfully challenged discriminatory hiring practices, and has a long career of standing shoulder to shoulder with working people at every turn in her career.

Ms. Lin's legal qualifications are excellent. She graduated from Cornell University and New York University School of Law, working multiple jobs during both college and law school. She began her career as a public defender in the District of Columbia. She went on to work at the Civil Rights Division at the Department of Justice, and later the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. She spent multiple years at the Michigan Poverty Law Program until she finally moved to Seattle.

In Washington State, Ms. Lin currently serves as president of the Board of Directors of the American Civil Liberties Union, and also works in private practice where she fights for the rights of employees and consumers.

She is deeply involved in our local community, mentoring the next generation of lawyers and dedicating her time to a range of pro bono projects in the region.

Ms. Lin's legal experience is unquestionable, but I also believe it is important that judges who sit on our Federal bench are reflective of the communities that they serve.

Our State is home to more than 1 million immigrants and nearly 1 million Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and Ms. Lin, who emigrated here with her family from Taiwan at the age of 3, will proudly serve as Washington State's first-ever Asian-American judge to sit on the Federal bench. That is a big deal.

Ms. Lin will bring integrity, independence, and compassion to the Seattle courthouse. Americans deserve a justice system that will uphold the rights of everyone, not just the wealthy and well-connected. Let's build a more fair court system and let's do that by appointing more public defenders and more civil rights lawyers like Ms. Lin as Federal judges.

NOMINATION OF DOUGLAS L. PARKER

Mr. President, I would also like to speak about President Biden's nominee to serve as Assistant Secretary of Occupational Safety and Health, Doug Parker.

This pandemic has put OSHA's critical work in the spotlight and underscored the Agency's responsibility to act and keep our workers safe. I am so glad President Biden has called on the Agency to take the critical step of setting forward an emergency temporary

standard to require large employers to use appropriate tools, like vaccines and testing, to keep our workers safe from COVID-19.

I hope to see progress on this front soon. Actions like that can save countless lives and are a reminder of why it is so critical we have an experienced leader at OSHA who will do everything in their power to champion worker safety.

Mr. Parker's record shows he has been doing that his entire career. Mr. Parker has worked to protect workers in his State throughout this pandemic as chief of California's Division of Occupational Safety and Health, starting with his move to swiftly issue health guidance back in February of 2020, when there were only 13 cases of COVID-19 in the entire country.

Even well before this pandemic, he had an established record fighting for worker safety as an attorney of the United Mine Workers, a partner at a labor and employment law firm in Washington, DC; and senior official at the Department of Labor's Mine Safety and Health Administration during one of the best streaks of safety in the industry's history.

When he previously left the Department of Labor, he went on to serve as the executive director of Worksafe. That is a legal aid nonprofit focused on worker health and safety.

At every step in his career, Mr. Parker has been a dogged advocate for worker safety. I have no doubt he will continue when he is confirmed to lead OSHA. Given the urgency of this pandemic and the clear qualifications of this nominee, I hope all of our colleagues will join me in voting in support of Mr. Parker's nomination.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. President, today, while I am here, I would also like to discuss the fiscal year 2022 appropriations bill for the Department of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Related Agencies, which we released this week.

A budget is a reflection of values. This bill shows exactly where Democrats' values are when it comes to help our working families and communities. This bill will help us respond to this pandemic and other health challenges by increasing funding for mental health and substance abuse disorders; maternal health and family planning; preventive care services; biomedical research, including a cutting-edge research agency; and public health, with the largest increase to CDC's budget authority in nearly two decades. This bill would also take the long overdue step of repealing the Hyde and Weldon amendments, which restrict people's ability to exercise their constitutional right to abortion just based on how they get their insurance.

It would invest in our children and students by increasing funding for childcare programs, early education programs, HBCUs and other minority-serving institutions, and Pell grants, and even doubling key funding for our

public schools, helping to close those important achievement gaps and making a quality public education available to every single child in our country.

As we work now to rebuild our economy, this bill would strengthen our workforce and support workers across the country with increased investments in workers' safety, the protection of workers' rights and wages, and virtually every workforce development program.

In short, this bill would support the health of our economy, our communities, and our families.

I will be pushing to make sure we get this across the finish line, and I hope Republicans will work with us to make these critical, commonsense investments.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2988

Mr. LEE. Madam President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be discharged from further consideration of S. 2988 and that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration. I further ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, reserving the right to object, once again, I am here to oppose a bill that would undermine our efforts to end this pandemic.

There are already State laws that address parental consent for vaccines, but this bill would trample on those laws and the rights of young adults across the country who are currently able to get vaccinated.

This bill does not take into account the rights of children who are experiencing homelessness but want to get vaccinated nor does it consider children who are emancipated and want to get vaccinated, and it could make getting vaccinated even harder for children who can currently make that decision for themselves under their States' laws.

We are trying to safely open schools, protect our communities, and end this pandemic that has killed over 700,000 people. Making it harder for anyone to get vaccinated and protect themselves is not helpful.

Therefore, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.